

## Wicken Fen Group Reedbed CES 2011

We successfully completed the twelfth CES session on 27 August.  
Very many thanks to all those who got involved through the summer.

### Results

See the separate table, cobbled together from IPMR, Excel, and the backs of envelopes. We caught 415 different individual birds (169 adults, and 246 juveniles) in 525 captures from 540 feet of net open for eight hours in twelve sessions.

### How do we compare?

The amount of net used in 116 CE sites recently analysed by the BTO varies from 375 to 960 feet. Our 540 feet is a bit above the median of 375 feet. The lowest CES catch in 2010 was 97 birds, and the highest was a stupendous 1223 (in 830 feet of net). The BTO table only shows the top 25 by size, but No 25 is 521 birds, 590 feet.

The most 'efficient' CES caught 1195 birds in 540 feet. That's 2.21 birds per foot. The top 25 most efficient ranged 2.21 to 1.14. Our 0.77 birds per foot probably reflects the closeness of our nets, and that, as we expected, the habitat isn't very numbers-rich.

The BTO's chart (relating catch to net-length) shows us almost exactly where they would have predicted us to be.

### Analysis

CES is all about year-on-year comparisons, but I'd just highlight two things that struck me from the table.

#### 1. *The proportion of "old" adults (birds already carrying rings on 1 May 2011)*

This is particularly striking for the returning Acros. 25% of the adult Sedge Warblers, and a massive 40% of the more philopatric adult Reed warblers had been ringed in 2010 or earlier.

The percentages are also important for species with smaller samples: 3 out of 4 adult Chiffchaffs; and 5 out of 6 adult Bullfinches.

#### 2. *The lurkers (aka the Bircham census principle)*

We caught no adult Dunnocks or Robins at all. Net-shy, or are they really not breeding in exactly that part of the Reedbed?

Michael Holdsworth

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